

Surveillance and Testing Requirements for Interstate Transport of Wild Caught Cervids

1. Purpose and Background

To establish new or augment existing free-ranging herds, States or Tribes may transport wild-caught cervids (elk, deer, moose, or other Cervidae) from one State or Tribal location to another for release. This document establishes a recommended minimum standard for testing and a uniform process of disease risk assessment to help prevent the spread of cervid diseases such as chronic wasting disease (CWD), bovine tuberculosis (TB), and brucellosis when wild cervids are captured for interstate movement and release.

States or Tribes planning to move wild-caught cervids interstate should refer to the guidance below to submit the proper documentation and requests to APHIS for approval. Cervid movements between, from, or to all American Zoological and Aquarium Association (AZA) accredited facilities and certified related facilities will follow all State and Federal movement requirements as stated in their current written policies.

This guidance document represents the Agency's position on this topic. It does not create or confer any rights for or on any person and does not bind the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the public. The information it contains may be made available to the public. While this document provides guidance for users outside VS, VS employees may not deviate from the directions provided herein without appropriate justification and supervisory concurrence.

2. Document Status

- A. Valid through August 12, 2019.
- B. This is a new document.

3. Reason for Reissuance

Not applicable.

4. Authority and References

- A. Authorities (Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and U.S. Code (U.S.C.)):
 - [7 U.S.C. 8301-8317](#)
 - [7 CFR 2.22](#)
 - [7 CFR 2.80](#)
 - [7 CFR 371.4](#)
 - [9 CFR 77.32](#)
 - [9 CFR 77.38](#)

- [9 CFR 81.2](#)
- [9 CFR 81.3](#)
- [9 CFR 76.2](#)
- [9 CFR 76.4](#)
- [9 CFR 76.6-10](#)
- [9 CFR 76.16](#)
- [9 CFR 76.17](#)

[VS Guidance Document 6701.2, "Tests for TB in Farmed and Captive Cervids" \(3/27/2014\)](#)

5. Audience

VS employees, other Federal and State agencies, and members of the public.

6. Guidance

States moving wild cervids interstate for release must document that the source population within a 50-mile radius and the specific animals to be moved are low risk for infection with bovine TB, brucellosis, and CWD based on a combination of individual animal testing and surveillance in the source population. Documentation of disease risk status could be provided through:

- Hunter harvest surveillance.
- Roadkill surveillance.
- Captive cervid surveillance.
- Other domestic livestock surveillance for TB and brucellosis.

The regulations at title 9, *Code of Federal Regulations* (9 CFR) part 77 describe the TB testing requirements for interstate movement of cervids. However, it is often impractical to meet the requirement for a whole herd test in wild populations of cervids. In this situation, a State or Tribe may ask APHIS to waive the whole herd test requirement with the concurrence of animal health officials in the receiving State. APHIS generally requires TB testing of the individual animals to be moved as a condition of the waiver. APHIS is preparing Federal brucellosis testing requirements for interstate movement of cervids. Currently, an importing State or Tribe may specify brucellosis testing requirements. Attachment 1 describes APHIS' recommended minimum testing protocol for TB and brucellosis in wild-caught cervids moved interstate for release. States receiving these cervids may impose additional testing requirements.

Additionally, 9 CFR 81.3 requires that States moving wild cervids interstate for release, document that the source population is at low risk for CWD through wildlife surveillance. The movement is subject to approval by the animal health officials of the receiving State or Tribe and APHIS.

A. Approvals

- 1) States or Tribes interested in capturing wild cervids and moving them interstate for release will submit the documentation described below for review and approval to the following:
 - a. APHIS Veterinary Services District Office in the origin and receiving States;
 - b. State or Tribal animal health officials in the origin and receiving State(s).
- 2) The shipping and receiving State or Tribal authorities and VS assistant director in the corresponding District Offices of both States will review the submitted documents for completeness. They will discuss problems with supporting documentation (i.e., documents are missing, inadequate, or unclear) with the appropriate contact in the State or Tribe of origin. Once the State or Tribe of origin has provided all required documentation, the receiving State(s) or Tribe(s) and APHIS will complete their review.
- 3) The VS assistant director in the receiving State will forward the documentation with his or her recommendation for approval to the Cervid Health Program.
- 4) The Cervid Health Program will review the documentation. The director overseeing the Cervid Health Program will notify the State or Tribe of origin and the receiving State(s) or Tribe(s) if APHIS approves interstate movement and release of wild-caught cervids.
- 5) Approval will not be granted for interstate movement and release of wild-caught cervids from States or zones having a recognized wildlife reservoir of bovine TB, brucellosis, or CWD as determined by the APHIS Administrator.
- 6) The State or Tribe of origin, the receiving State(s) or Tribe(s), and APHIS will each sign the Agreement for Interstate Transportation of Wild Cervids (Attachment 2) to complete the approval process.

B. Required Documentation

States moving wild cervids interstate for release will submit a summary statement and supporting documentation that demonstrates that the source population and the specific animals to be moved are low risk for infection with bovine TB, brucellosis, and CWD. This documentation can be based on individual animal testing, surveillance in the source population, or both. APHIS requests the following documentation from the State or Tribe of origin to fully evaluate the potential risk of these diseases in the source population:

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- 1) The State or Tribe of origin is to provide a summary statement with a narrative description of the translocation project including cervid type, number of animals, capture sites, disease mitigation factors, active and passive surveillance activities, and animal health testing protocols before and after movement, disposition of injured animals, and State or Tribe of destination. Additional supporting documentation should include:
 - a. Maps showing a 50-mile radius of the areas such as counties or game management units where wild cervids will be sourced for capture. Include the involvement of any adjacent State or Tribal area.
 - b. Descriptions of the population density of wild cervids within those locations and methods used to estimate and define the population, with emphasis on the cervid species to be translocated.
 - c. Descriptions of previous or historic wild cervid translocations into or out of this geographic region (origin of the cervids, their species, when the movement occurred, destination).
- 2) The State or Tribe of origin's summary statement should also describe the area's disease history and epidemiology for CWD, including:
 - a. CWD surveillance of wild cervids within the 50-mile radius geographic region conducted per year for at least the last 5 years (preferably for the last 10 years). Include both passive (hunter harvest and found dead) and targeted surveillance for CWD, if applicable.
 1. The summary statement should describe how the origin population was determined to be low risk for CWD. For example, hunter harvested samples may have been collected within the defined radius/population to detect infection at a specified, low level of prevalence with a specified, high level of confidence (i.e., 1 percent prevalence with 95 percent confidence). Sampling strategies that target high-risk animals or other commonly accepted wildlife surveillance strategies that would detect CWD infection at low levels could also be used.
 2. Optionally, a whole-herd rectal biopsy or other mutually agreed-on method of antemortem CWD test with concurrent genotyping may be performed on the assembled herd. Laboratory results must be "not detected" on all animals. Animals with untestable or incorrect location samples (i.e., samples that are autolyzed or of the wrong tissue type) may be retested.

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- b. Captive/farmed herd participation and compliance in an approved State CWD Herd Certification Program (HCP) or CWD monitoring program (number of herds, number of animals) including documented escapes within the 50-mile radius.
 - c. Captive/farmed herds with less than 5 years CWD HCP status (number of herds, number of animals).
 - d. Captive/farmed herds not enrolled in the CWD HCP program within the 50-mile radius.
 - e. Any CWD-positive results or traced animals in farmed/captive or wild cervids in the State over the last 10 years, with emphasis on the 50-mile radius geographic region of the source population for translocation.
- 3) The State or Tribe of origin's summary statement should further describe the disease history and epidemiology for TB and brucellosis in all species, including:
- a. TB and brucellosis surveillance of wild cervids in the geographic region conducted per year, for the last 5 years. Include both passive and targeted surveillance, if applicable.
 - b. Compliant participation in a captive/farmed cervid TB accredited herd program (number of herds, number of animals) within the 50-mile radius.
 - c. The number of captive/farmed cervid herds in the radius area that are TB accredited and the number that are not accredited.
 - d. Any TB or brucellosis positive results or traced animals in farmed/captive or wild cervids in the State or Tribe over the last 5 years with an emphasis on the 50-mile radius geographic region of the source population for translocation.
 - e. Compliant participation in the captive/farmed Cervid Brucellosis Certification Program (number of herds, number of animals).
 - f. Number of captive/farmed cervid herds in the area that are certified brucellosis-free cervid herds and the number that are not accredited.
 - g. Number of captive/farmed cervid herds in the area that are brucellosis-monitored cervid herds.

- 4) Antemortem testing for TB and brucellosis will be completed and reported with approved tests and will meet or exceed the attached recommended minimum testing protocol (Attachment 1). Additional testing may also be performed. The testing schedule must be included in the application documents. A protocol for dealing with an animal testing positive to any disease test must also be included.

7. Inquiries

Please direct any inquiries to:
VS Cervid Health Staff Officer
USDA APHIS Veterinary Services
National Center for Animal Health Programs
2150 Centre Avenue, Bldg. B
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Attachment 1

A Recommended Minimum Testing Protocol for Tuberculosis and Brucellosis in Wild Caught Cervids for Interstate Translocation

Testing is to begin on the group to be translocated 30 days after the last wild trapped animal is added. After the last trapped animal is added, the assembled group of cervids is considered quarantined and no other animals may be added. The group must be contained within an enclosure surrounded by a double 8-foot fence, with the two fences separated by at least a meter. All animals must be affixed with a USDA-approved unique identification device and a second ID to comply with CWD rules. Any animals that die at any time during capture, quarantine, or transport must be subjected to a full necropsy to rule out pathology that could indicate TB or brucellosis. Additionally, they must be tested for CWD at an approved NAHLN CWD testing lab or the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL). Receiving State(s) or Tribe(s) may also require additional testing or quarantine requirements at their discretion.

Testing:

Brucellosis (Serology):

- Screening Test: rapid automated presumption (RAP) or buffered acidified plate antigen (BAPA) – If positive, then complete:
 - Secondary Test: Fluorescence polarization assay (FPA) – If FPA is positive, then complete:
 - Confirmatory Test: Complement fixation (CF) – If the CF is positive and the animal is a reactor, perform necropsy and culture.
- If CF is positive the entire group may be disqualified for translocation.

Tuberculosis:

Serologic and skin testing will be conducted in parallel with a positive of any one method, taking precedence over negative results by other methods.

Skin testing:

Single Cervical Test – If there is a response, one of the following will be done:

Necropsy according to NVSL's cervid TB necropsy protocol. Submit appropriate tissues to NVSL for histopathology, polymerase chain reaction (PCR), and culture. If results are positive for *M. bovis*, the entire group is disqualified for translocation and must be euthanized.

Comparative Cervical Test – If the test shows the animal is a suspect or reactor then euthanize the animal and perform a necropsy according to Cervid TB necropsy protocol. Submit appropriate tissues to NVSL for histopathology, PCR, and culture. If the test is positive for *M. bovis*, the entire group is disqualified for translocation and must be euthanized.

Serology:

Serum should be submitted to NVSL for a dual path platform (DPP) test. If the test is positive the animal may be euthanized and necropsied at that time or it may be held and retested with the DPP no sooner than 30 days after the initial test. If the DPP test is positive the second time, the animal must be euthanized and necropsied according to cervid TB necropsy protocol and appropriate tissues submitted to NVSL for histopathology, PCR, and culture. If the necropsy results are positive for *M. bovis*, the entire group is disqualified for translocation and must be euthanized.

Movement:

The animals may be moved after all have tested negative for TB and brucellosis and a pre-movement health examination does not find signs of any infectious disease or illness. Health officials of the receiving or importing State or Tribe may require a pre-transport holding period of their choosing.

Transport:

Interstate transportation of quarantined animals must be in an approved solid enclosed conveyance with proper ventilation under official seal affixed by a State veterinarian or a VS veterinary medical officer. This seal may only be opened by a VS veterinary medical officer, State veterinarian, Tribal representative, or approved accredited veterinarian. The shipment must be accompanied by a properly filled out certificate of veterinary inspection (CVI) or other approved movement document that shows all official animal identification numbers of each animal to be moved. The CVI must also include:

- the number of animals covered by the certificate;
- the purpose for which the animals are to be moved;
- points of origin and destination;
- the consignor and the consignee; and
- a statement by the issuing veterinarian that the animals were not exhibiting clinical signs associated with CWD, TB, brucellosis or other contagious disease at the time of examination.

Cleaning and disinfection of the conveyance will be performed at the animals' point of destination under the supervision of a State, Tribal, or APHIS representative.

Point of Destination:

When the animals are offloaded at the point of destination an APHIS or State animal health official, Tribal representative, or approved accredited veterinarian will be present to document any sick animals, injuries, or deaths.

All animals will be confined under quarantine in an enclosure of adequate size to provide for the animals' welfare, and surrounded by a double 8-foot-high perimeter fence with at least 1 meter between the fences. The group of animals will be held under this quarantine for up to 120 days after being assembled to establish a herd. Once the herd is established, the whole herd TB test can be completed.

- Brucellosis testing will be repeated at the discretion of the importing State.
- TB testing must be repeated using the DPP serological testing protocol as described in VS Guidance Document 6701.2. Parallel skin testing may also be done according to the prescribed SCT/CCT protocol. If skin testing is used it must be done not less than 90 days after an original skin test.

Animals showing non-negative results to any serologic or skin tests must be necropsied and tissues for TB and CWD testing submitted to NVSL. The entire group must be kept in quarantine until histopathology and culture results are finalized and reported to be negative for *M. bovis* and immunohistochemistry is reported as "not detected" for CWD. If the confirmatory testing at NVSL is negative for all euthanized animals, the remaining animals in the lot may be released.

Attachment 2: INTERSTATE MOVEMENT OF WILD CERVIDS BETWEEN:

(State of origin) _____ **AND (Receiving State)** _____

The purpose of this document is to indicate the review and agreement by the State of origin _____, the receiving State _____, and their respective state agencies having authority for wild cervids; and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), in accordance with the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) rule - 9 CFR Part 81.3(b), that the summary statement and supporting documentation provided by (State of origin) _____, from which wild cervids will be obtained for this interstate movement, are from a source population documented to be low risk to CWD based on the information provided.

Further, and as applicable, that the wild cervids to be translocated either (check appropriate box):

Meet the bovine tuberculosis testing requirements for interstate movement of captive/ wild cervids in accordance with 9 CFR Parts 77.20 and 77.27, **OR**

The States have requested and received from APHIS a waiver of the bovine tuberculosis testing requirements for interstate movement of the captive /wild cervids in accordance with 9 CFR Part 77.38.

With the signature of the APHIS official(s) below, it is acknowledged that the waiver for bovine tuberculosis testing requirements for captive wild caught cervids is granted in accordance with 9 CFR Part 77.38

In addition, each of the cervids captured from this wild population for interstate movement and release must have two forms of animal identification, one of which is USDA official animal identification, in accordance with 9 CFR Part 81.3(b).

STATE of ORIGIN/ AGENCY:

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

NAME/TITLE: _____ State Veterinarian

STATE of ORIGIN/ AGENCY:

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

NAME/TITLE: _____ Wildlife Veterinarian

RECEIVING STATE/AGENCY:

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

NAME/ TITLE: _____¹⁰ State Veterinarian

RECEIVING STATE/AGENCY:

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

NAME/ TITLE: _____ Wildlife Veterinarian

USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Signatures:

Cervid Health Center Director: _____ Date: _____

Exporting State

District Assistant Director: _____ Date: _____

Receiving State

District Assistant Director: _____ Date _____